



Northern New Mexico selected for TechHire Initiative

January 3, 2017



In March 2015, President Obama launched the [TechHire initiative](#) based on the simple idea that building a pipeline of tech talent can bring new jobs to local economies, facilitate business growth, and give local residents a pathway into the middle class.

To build this pipeline, TechHire promotes programs—such as coding bootcamps and online courses—to quickly train people with limited technology skills and have them ready to work technical jobs in only a matter of months.

In December, Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico—essentially communities above and along I-40 with the exception of the Albuquerque metro area—was selected to be one of 71 nationwide TechHire regions. According to a White House press release: “All TechHire communities went through an intensive and competitive application process to demonstrate their level of commitment and readiness in expanding the technology sector. This TechHire designation shows that Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico have

the partners, employers, training providers, and the civil leadership support needed to implement and scale tech job opportunities for everyone.”

[Community Learning Network](#), a Santa Fe-based nonprofit dedicated to “building communities through real-life learning,” submitted the original TechHire proposal and is leading the regional TechHire initiative. Community Learning Network launched the website nmtechworks.com to begin mapping, showcasing, expanding, and linking pathways to tech careers, especially for rural, Native American, and Spanish-speaking members of the community. The goal is to train more than 500 students (of all ages) by 2020 for high-demand tech jobs with regional Tech employers such as Los Alamos National Laboratory, OpenEye Scientific Software, EMR-Bear, and Descartes Labs.



Navajo students at a coding bootcamp.

In December 2016, with help from New Mexico TechWorks’ growing task force of regional educators, organizations, and businesses including Los Alamos National Laboratory, more than 50 professionals from the Lab volunteered in classrooms and more than 230 schools statewide hosted “Hour of Code” events in celebration of National Computer Science Education Week.

In March, Cultivating Coders will launch the first eight-week coding bootcamp in Santa Fe. Cultivating Coders is a locally based accelerated training provider that specializes in facilitating intensive Software Developer training programs for underserved communities.

“Many students and residents in our region are unaware of the wealth of tech start-ups and tech companies, both small and large, that are growing and thriving here,” says Jennifer Nevarez, founder of the New Mexico TechWorks program and Director of Community Learning Network. “Creative, well-paying, and even highly flexible and innovative work opportunities come with a growing technology ecosystem. We are

thrilled for Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico to be recognized by the White House and to join the national TechHire initiative, and we are excited to be working together to strengthen tech education, workforce, and business development in our region."



Students and a retired Los Alamos employee participate in an Hour of Code on December 5.

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